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ODE

FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST OF JUNE

1887

BY J. H. HUNTER, M. A.

F. Pollock

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FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST OF JUNE

1887

BY

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Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

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O D E

. . . *SUNT HIC SUA PRAEMIA LAUDI,*
SUNT LACRIMAE RERUM : . .

AS when the snowdrop from the snowy ground
 Lifting a maiden face, foretells the flowers
 That lurk and listen, till the chaffinch sound
 Spring's advent with the glistening willow crown'd,
 Sheathed in their silken bowers :—
 E'en so the promise of her life appears
 Through those white childhood-years ;
 —Whether in seaside happiness, and air
 Rosing the fair cheek,—sand, and spade, and shell,—
 Or race with sister-feet, that flash'd and fell
 Printing the beach, while the gay comrade-wind
 Play'd in the soft light hair :—
 Or if with sunbeam-smile and kind
 Small hand at cottage-door
 Her simple alms she tender'd to the poor :
 Love's healthy happy heart in all her steps was seen,
 And GOD, in life's fresh springtime, bless'd our QUEEN.

II

Lo! the quick months their order'd dance pursue,
And Spring's bright apple-blossoms flush to fruit;
The bay-tree thrives 'neath Heaven's own gracious dew,
And her young shoots the parent-life renew
Around the fostering root.

—The Girl from care in youth's sweet sleep withdrawn
Wakes to a crown at dawn!

But Love is at her side, strong, faithful, wise,
To share the world-wide burden of command,
The sceptre's weight in the unlesson'd hand;
To aid each nursery inmate,—each in turn
Dear pride of watchful eyes,—
To clasp the innocent hands, and learn
The words of love and grace,

Lifting their souls to the compassionate Face:—

While o'er the fortunate fold the SHEPHERD watch'd unseen;
And home, in all its beauty, bless'd a QUEEN.

III

AH! Happy she, who wedded finds in one
Wisest and dearest! happy, happy years!
But summer whirlwinds wait on summer's sun;
Where the Five Rivers from HIMALA run,
His snow where EVEREST rears,
Or ALMA's echoing crags with war-cry wake
The wind-vest EUXINE lake.
—O Death in myriad forms! O brutal roar
Of battle! throes of race, and crash of thrones!
Imploring hands, and wreck of whitening bones
In KHYBER pass;—Or woman's stifled cry,
And that dark pit of gore!
—Yet night had light; for He was by,
Her heart, her strength, her shield,
Twin-star in the Throne's radiance self-conceal'd;
Love's hand laid light on hers, guiding the ship unseen—
For God's best grace in ALBERT bless'd the QUEEN.

IV

BUT at our side each hour with ambush'd sword
Death hurries, nor for prayer nor love delays ;
In God's own time His harvest-sheaves are stored,
'For My thoughts are not your thoughts,' saith the LORD,
'Nor are your ways My ways.'
He Who spared not the SON His bitter cup,
The broken heart binds up
In His fit hour, All-Merciful!—And she,
The desolate faithful Mother, in the nest
By children's love soft-woven, has found rest ;
Some constant to her side, if some have flown
The Angels' road, and see
The Vision of the Eternal Throne :—
With them, 'tis well!—But thou,
Strong through submission, to His will dost bow,
Till God renew the home in that far realm unseen,
And bless with all her lost ones ENGLAND'S QUEEN.

V

YET in great Nature's changeful mystic dance
 Joy circles grief, gay dawn outsmiles the night :
 'Tis meet our song should build its radiance
 Like some high palace-porch, and walls that glance
 With gold and marble light :
 Now fifty suns 'neath one firm patriot sway
 Have whirl'd their shining way.
 —Lo Commerce with the golden girdling chain
 That links all nations for the good of each ;
 While Science boasts her silent lightning speech
 Swifter than thought ; and how her patience rein'd
 To post o'er earth and main
 The panting white-breath'd Titan, chain'd
 Bondslave to man :—and won
 The magic spark o'erdazzling star and sun
 From its dark cave : for He, the all-seeing LORD unseen
 Enlightening, bless'd the years of ENGLAND'S QUEEN.

VI

FREEDOM of ENGLAND! from thy sacred source
Where ALFRED arm'd in ATHELNEY, welling pure,
With hero-blood dyed in thy widening course,
—What loyaler hand than her's to guide thy force
Down ancient channels sure?
Honour of ENGLAND! in what bosom stirs
Thy soul more quick than her's?
Yet in her days O greater grief, than when
In years of woe, the years of happiness
Flash o'er us,—to behold,—and no redress,—
Some deed of shame we cannot cure nor stay!
Our best, our man of men,
Martyr'd inch-meal by dull delay!
Ah, sacred, hidden grave!
Ah gallant comrade feet, love-wing'd to save,
Too late, too late!—But Thou, Whose counsels work unseen,
Spare us henceforth such pangs, spare ENGLAND'S QUEEN!

VII

O MUCH enduring, much revered! To thee
Bring sun-dyed millions love more sweet than fame,
And happy isles that star the purple sea
Homage ;—and children at the mother's knee
With her's unite thy name ;
And faithful hearts, that throb 'neath palm and pine,
From East to West, are thine.
For as some pillar-star o'er sea and storm
Whole fleets to haven guides, so from that height
One great example points the path of Right,
And purifies the home ; with gracious aid
Lifting the fallen form.
See Death by finer skill delay'd ;
Kind hearts to wait on woe,
And feet of Love that in CHRIST's footsteps go ;
Wild wastes of life reclaim'd by Woman's hand unseen :
All ENGLAND bless'd with ENGLAND'S EMPRESS QUEEN.

VIII

AND now, as one who through some fruitful field
Has urged the fifty furrows of the grain,—
Look round with joy, and know thy care will yield
A thousandfold in its due day reveal'd,
The harvest laugh again :—
E'en now thy great crown'd ancestors on high
Watch with exultant eye
Thy hundred ENGLANDS o'er the broad earth sown,
And ARTHUR lives anew to hail his heir !
—O then for her and us we chant the prayer,—
Keep Thou this sea-girt citadel of the free
Safe 'neath her ancient throne,
Love-link'd in loyal unity ;
Let eve's calm after-glow
Arch all the heaven with Hope's wide roseate bow :
Till in Time's fulness Thou, ALMIGHTY LORD unseen,
With glory and life immortal crown the QUEEN.



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